

## CLAIMS:

1. A method for encoding video data consisting of one or several bitstreams according to the MPEG-4 standard, characterized in that a specific alignment/fragmentation mechanism is chosen, according to which, when said video bitstreams are encoded using the syntax mode corresponding to a fragmentation of the Video Object Planes (VOPs) contained in said video data into Video Packets (VPs) and of Video Packets into Data Partitions (DPs), a Video Data Partition is mapped into one or more Sync Layer packets (SL packets), the first Video Data Partition start is always mapped to an SL packet start even if a large Video Data Partition is splitted across several SL packets, and the last SL packet transporting the first Data Partition includes the separation marker and up to 7 subsequent bits of the second Data Partition in order to obtain byte alignment, the next SL packet starting on the next bit of the second Data Partition.

2. A device for encoding video data consisting of one or several bitstreams according to the MPEG-4 standard, said device comprising a specific alignment/fragmentation mechanism, according to which, when said video bitstreams are encoded using the syntax mode corresponding to a fragmentation of the Video Object Planes (VOPs) contained in said video data into Video Packets (VPs) and of Video Packets into Data Partitions (DPs), a Video Data Partition is mapped into one or more Sync Layer packets (SL packets), the first Video Data Partition start is always mapped to an SL packet start even if a large Video Data Partition is splitted across several SL packets, and the last SL packet transporting the first Data Partition includes the separation marker and up to 7 subsequent bits of the second Data Partition in order to obtain byte alignment, the next SL packet starting on the next bit of the second Data Partition.

3. A coded MPEG-4 signal consisting of at least a video bitstream obtained at the output of an encoding device in which a specific alignment/fragmentation mechanism is chosen, according to which, when said video bitstream(s) is (are) encoded using the syntax mode corresponding to a fragmentation of the Video Object Planes (VOPs) contained in said video data into Video Packets (VPs) and of Video Packets into Data Partitions (DPs), a Video

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- 5 Partition in order to obtain byte alignment, the next SL packet starting on the next bit of the second Data Partition.

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